

# SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

106th Congress  
1st Session

Vote No. 43

March 11, 1999, 4:03 p.m.  
Page S-2561 Temp. Record

## EDUCATION MANDATE WAIVERS/New Federal Dropout Prevention Program

**SUBJECT:** Education Flexibility Partnership Act . . . S. 280. Jeffords motion to table the Bingaman/Reid amendment No. 63 to the committee substitute amendment No. 31.

### ACTION: MOTION TO TABLE AGREED TO, 55-44

**SYNOPSIS:** As reported, S. 280, the Education Flexibility Partnership Act, will expand eligibility for participation in the Education Flexibility (Ed-Flex) Program to all 50 States (currently only 12 States are eligible). Under the program, an eligible State may request that the Department of Education give it the right to grant to local education agencies waivers of certain Federal education regulatory and statutory requirements. A State that gives a waiver to a local education agency also must waive its own similar statutory and regulatory education requirements. Certain Federal regulatory and statutory requirements, including requirements relating to health and safety and civil rights, may not be waived. (Federal education funding provides between 6 percent and 7 percent of total public school funding, a third of which is for nutrition rather than education programs. The Federal Government closely controls how the funds it gives are spent, which hampers local innovation. Also, the 4 percent of funding that it gives is responsible for more than 50 percent of the administrative work in many school districts, due to the extensive paperwork requirements that come with Federal assistance.)

The committee substitute amendment would add public notice provisions, strengthen accountability provisions, and make technical corrections as agreed to by the managers.

**The Bingaman/Reid amendment** would authorize the National Dropout Prevention Act. The Act would authorize \$150 million for fiscal year (FY) 2000 and such sums as necessary for later years. In FY 2000, \$5 million of the authorized amount would be for national activities, including the creation of a national clearinghouse on dropout prevention programs. The rest would be distributed among the States according to the Title I formula. The States would then award competitive grants to schools or local education districts with the highest dropout rates. The grants would be used to start new dropout prevention programs.

Debate was limited by unanimous consent. After debate, Senator Jeffords moved to table the amendment. Generally, those

(See other side)

YEAS (55)		NAYS (44)		NOT VOTING (1)	
Republicans (55 or 100%)	Democrats (0 or 0%)	Republicans (0 or 0%)	Democrats (44 or 100%)	Republicans (0)	Democrats (1)
Abraham	Hutchinson		Akaka	Johnson	
Allard	Hutchison		Baucus	Kennedy	
Ashcroft	Inhofe		Bayh	Kerrey	
Bennett	Jeffords		Biden	Kerry	
Bond	Kyl		Bingaman	Kohl	
Brownback	Lott		Boxer	Landrieu	
Bunning	Lugar		Breaux	Lautenberg	
Burns	Mack		Bryan	Leahy	
Campbell	McCain		Byrd	Levin	
Chafee	McConnell		Cleland	Lieberman	
Cochran	Murkowski		Conrad	Lincoln	
Collins	Nickles		Daschle	Mikulski	
Coverdell	Roberts		Dodd	Moynihan	
Craig	Roth		Dorgan	Reid	
Crapo	Santorum		Durbin	Reid	
DeWine	Sessions		Edwards	<b>EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:</b> 1—Official Business 2—Necessarily Absent 3—Illness 4—Other	
Domenici	Shelby		Feingold		
Enzi	Smith, Bob		Feinstein		
Fitzgerald	Smith, Gordon		Graham		
Frist	Snowe		Harkin	<b>SYMBOLS:</b> AY—Announced Yea AN—Announced Nay PY—Paired Yea PN—Paired Nay	
Gorton	Specter		Hollings		
Gramm	Stevens		Inouye		
Grams	Thomas				
Grassley	Thompson				
Gregg	Thurmond				
Hagel	Voinovich				
Hatch	Warner				
Helms					

Compiled and written by the staff of the Republican Policy Committee—Larry E. Craig, Chairman

favoring the motion to table opposed the amendment; those opposing the motion to table favored the amendment.

**Those favoring** the motion to table contended:

Proponents of the Bingaman amendment clearly believe that the problem of kids dropping out of school is the greatest education problem in America. We agree that in many schools it is, but it just as surely is not in other schools. The problems are varied and complex. We know, for instance, that half of all kids who stay in school are graduating functionally illiterate, largely due to the problem of social promotion. If we got rid of social promotion, would more children quit school out of frustration when they were held back a grade? Should we give incentives for States to form smaller secondary schools, or "schools within schools," because students in smaller secondary schools perform better? In many cases, it is obvious that the principal of a school can make a huge difference in a school's performance--how can that success be duplicated? All of these subjects are interrelated, and all of these subjects will be dealt with on the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which the Senate will consider this summer. Hearings are now underway on that bill. The proper place to consider amendments such as the Bingaman amendment is on that bill, because they can then be considered in the context of the overall Federal public education plan for the next 6 years. At that time, some of us may support some version of the Bingaman amendment, which obviously addresses a large problem. Others of us are more likely to take a dim view of creating yet one more Federal education program. The Federal Government, as of May 1997, already had 788 separate education programs, which together were spending \$968 billion annually. We think that instead of creating new programs as suggested by many Democrats, we should be consolidating those programs, getting rid of many of them, eliminating regulations, and returning authority to the States and local school boards. The bottom line, though, is that on this bill we will only consider items that have broad support and can be considered outside of the context of other educational priorities. Therefore, we support the motion to table.

**Those opposing** the motion to table contended:

Our colleagues are correct that the normal procedure would be to consider the Bingaman amendment on the ESEA reauthorization bill. However, we have offered it now because this bill will very likely soon become law, and the ESEA, even though we will consider it this summer, is a huge bill that will take time to work through the legislative process, so it will probably not be enacted for another 18 months. During that time, another 750,000 children will drop out of high school and will suffer the consequences for the rest of their lives. That is too large a loss to accept for reasons of obeisance to the legislative process. Statistics tell the story. High school graduates earn nearly twice as much as dropouts; dropouts are three times as likely to end up in poverty as are high school graduates; dropouts make up 82 percent of the prison population. For Hispanics, the problem is worse--the national dropout rate is 11 percent, but for Hispanics it is 30 percent. We urge our colleagues not to wait to pass this needed program. We urge them to oppose the motion to table.